

**U.S. House of Representatives**

## COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

335 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515

<http://veterans.house.gov>

September 6, 2017

The Honorable Gene Dodaro  
Comptroller General of the United States  
Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

Nearly half of our country's veterans are 65 years of age or older. Many of these veterans will seek VA Nursing Home Care, which can include care in VA community living centers, state veterans homes, and community nursing homes. Ensuring the vulnerable population of older veterans receives quality nursing home care is critical. Also important for VA nursing home patients is maintaining a quality of life by providing sanitary and safe living environments, promoting and protecting veterans' rights to autonomy, and treating veterans with respect and dignity.

Concerns have been raised about VA's oversight of quality of nursing home care—for example at VA community living centers—and also whether veterans and their families have access to quality of care information. Also, as VA looks toward future budget considerations, the costs of long-term care and ways to provide care to veterans more cost-effectively is under scrutiny. We would like GAO to perform a study on VA Nursing Home Care; specifically, we request that GAO address the following questions:

1. What data does VA have on the costs of VA long-term care across the three different settings, and what steps are being taken, if any, to provide such care in the most cost-effect manner?
2. What are the trends in utilization of VA nursing home care across the three different settings?
3. How does VA oversee the quality of care and the quality of life for veterans within each of the nursing home care settings?
4. What information does VA provide to consumers—veterans and their families—about the quality of care provided in each of the nursing home care settings?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions about this request, please contact Elizabeth Mackenzie, Minority Health Subcommittee Staff Director at [elizabeth.mackenzie@mail.house.gov](mailto:elizabeth.mackenzie@mail.house.gov) or (202) 225-9756.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim J. Walz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tim" and last name "Walz" clearly distinguishable.

**TIM J. WALZ**  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Veterans Affairs